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Illinois
Environmental
Protection Agency

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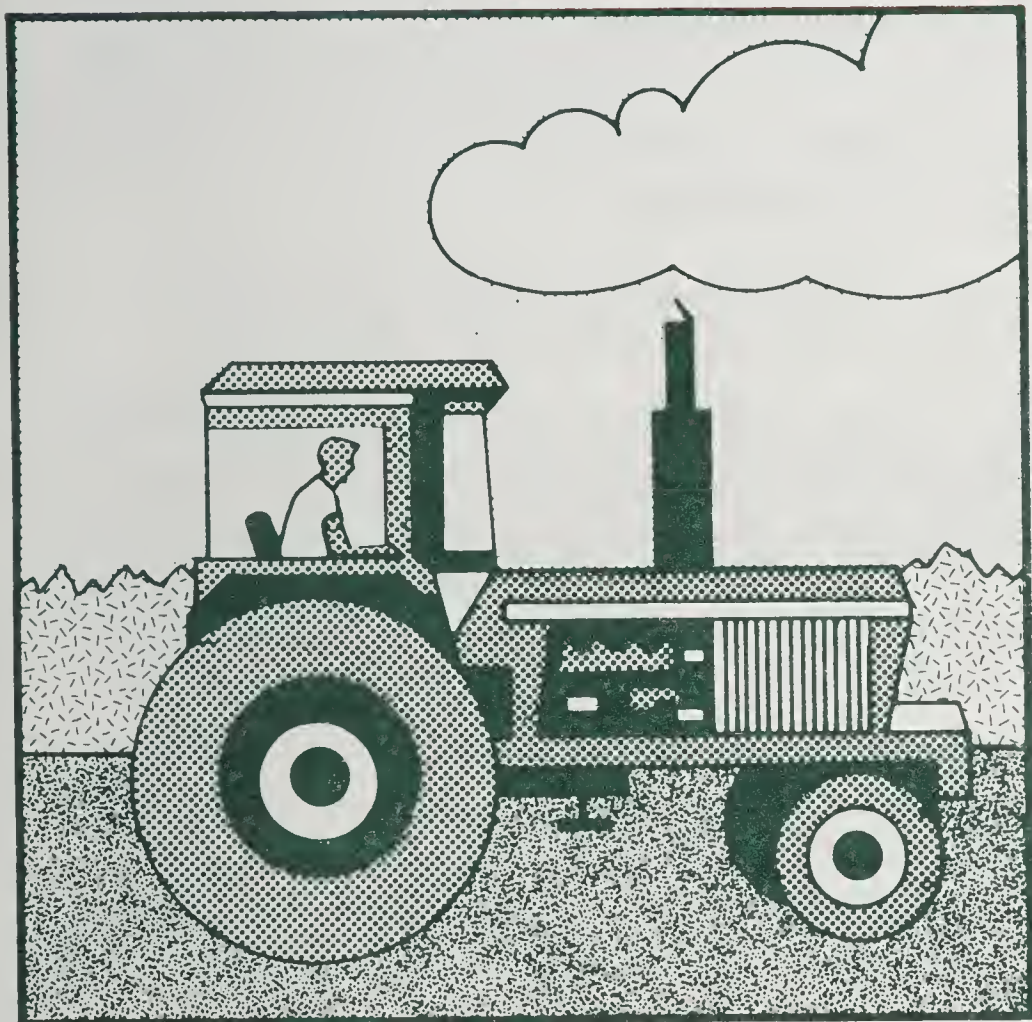
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IEPA and the Agricultural Community

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The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency was created to protect, restore, and enhance the environment. The mission of the IEPA is *"the realization of the best environmental conditions possible consistent with the social and economic needs of the people of Illinois."*

This pamphlet explains how the IEPA's agricultural programs interact with the agricultural community. The IEPA has an agriculture advisor who provides technical assistance on agriculture-related matters, coordinates inter-divisional agricultural activities, and serves as the Agency's liaison to agricultural organizations and industries, and other governmental agencies.

REGULATORY PROGRAMS

The Illinois Agriculture-Related Pollution Regulations dealing with livestock wastes and certain sections of the Air Pollution Control Regulations pertaining to grain elevators are the only IEPA-administered regulations specific to agriculture. Other rules and standards in the air, land, and water pollution regulations indirectly affect agricultural operations by limiting the discharge or placement of agricultural wastes into the environment.

PERMITS

The air, water, and land bureaus of the IEPA issue permits in agriculturally related situations that correspond with their respective divisions' work. The Division of Water Pollution Control under the Bureau of Water issues permits for some large feedlot operations, for the use of municipal sludge on cropland and for facilities that treat agrichemical wastewaters. The Division of Air Pollution Control under the Bureau of Air permits grain handling and grain elevator

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pollution control facilities as well as certain fertilizer blending operations. Land Pollution Control permits and tracks the disposal of agrichemical wastes. IEPA and the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) have developed a special arrangement in which both agencies review permit applications submitted by agrichemical facilities for containment structures. IDOA grants permits to those agrichemical facilities which are in compliance with the Department's Part 255, Agrichemical Facilities Containment Regulations. IEPA's Bureau of Water and Bureau of Air endorse those permits where compliance with State environmental regulations is evident.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE UNIT

The Agency's Emergency Response Unit (ERU), works with the agricultural community responding to such emergencies as chemical spills or fires. The ERU occasionally coordinates the disposal of unused or unwanted agricultural wastes.

AGRICULTURE LAND PRESERVATION POLICY

On July 22, 1980, then Gov. James R. Thompson signed an executive order entitled "Preservation of Illinois Farmland" which requires state agencies to develop an agriculture land preservation policy. In response to that order, the IEPA prepared an operational policy for implementation.

The "Agricultural Land Preservation Policy" recognizes the need to maintain the quality of the state's productive agricultural land, and also to protect this valuable resource from permanent conversion to non-agricultural uses. Subsequently, the General Assembly passes PA 82-945, the Farmland Preservation Act. Both the act and the policy mandates the preservation and protection of agricultural land.

LIVESTOCK WASTE MANAGEMENT

IEPA has in its regional offices state-wide, five Agricultural Engineers assigned as livestock waste management personnel, who are responsible for investigating problems caused by livestock operations.

Investigations of livestock facilities are initiated by complaints or by random selection if a facility is suspected of not being in compliance. When an IEPA employee visits a livestock facility, the operator is informed whether or not the facility is in compliance. If it is not, the IEPA representative tells the operator what is wrong and offers general recommendations on bringing the facility into compliance. If a problem cannot be resolved voluntarily, an enforcement action may be filed with the Illinois Pollution Control Board.

AGRICHEMICAL PROGRAMS

The extensive use of agricultural chemicals in Illinois requires that the Agency be involved in follow-ups to agrichemical incidents, pesticide waste management, and pesticide monitoring.

Agency field personnel are dispatched to locations where improper handling of pesticides and pesticide-related wastes may be the cause of air, water or land pollution. The agency is responsible for investigating such incidents as pesticide-related fish kills, open-dumping of pesticide waste materials, accidental spills, and air pollution from burning pesticide wastes.

IEPA's Division of Water Pollution Control under the Bureau of Water monitors for agricultural pesticides in a subnetwork of its Ambient Monitoring Network. This subnetwork consists of 30 stations: 25 in predominately agricultural watersheds and five in nonagricultural watersheds.

IEPA is also involved in special projects to develop pesticide waste management technologies.

SLUDGE APPLICATIONS

The recycling and utilization of suitable municipal sludges on land helps to conserve the nutrient, humus, soil, and energy resources of Illinois.

IEPA is responsible for regulating agricultural uses of municipal sludge and ensuring that land application projects are conducted in an environmentally acceptable manner. To meet the responsibility, IEPA adopted a set of design criteria for sludge application on land that set forth rules for transporting, storing, and land-applying municipal sewage and water treatment plant lime sludge.

The rules require all sludge generators to obtain a permit from IEPA if the generator wants to land apply sludge. Permits are also required for persons using, or distributing to the public, large quantities of sludge.

IEPA WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

IEPA works closely with the Illinois Department of Agriculture and other members of the "Conservation Family" on non-point sources of pollution, construction site erosion, hydro modification, soil erosion, pesticides, and waste management.

In addressing soil erosion and conservation issues, IEPA works mainly with the Department of Agriculture through its Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD).

The IEPA works cooperatively with the SWCD's and AISWCD in collecting and dis-

tributing information to the public on numerous environmental issues, and providing technical assistance to potential applicants for available program funds.

IEPA also participates on several advisory committees for federal programs administered by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), Cooperative Extension Service, and Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

IEPA works with the Illinois Department of Conservation (IDOC) on lake programs involving restoration and protection. IEPA provides IDOC with water quality data to rank lakes and their watersheds for potential projects.

Livestock waste management problems identified by IEPA frequently call for the mutual attention of the Extension Service, SCS, and various producer groups.

On agrichemical issues, the IEPA strives to advance agrichemical safety, waste management, and spill prevention programs with the regulated sector through organizations such as the Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association, and the Illinois Farm Bureau.

For more information contact:

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